Canada at War

SPEECH

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Rt. Hon.

Sir Robert Laird Borden

K.C., P.C., G.C.M.G.

IN THE

HOUSE OF COMMONS

ON

The Imperial War Cabinet, 1917,

The Imperial War Conference, 1917,

AND

Compulsory Military Enlistment

MAY 18th, 1917

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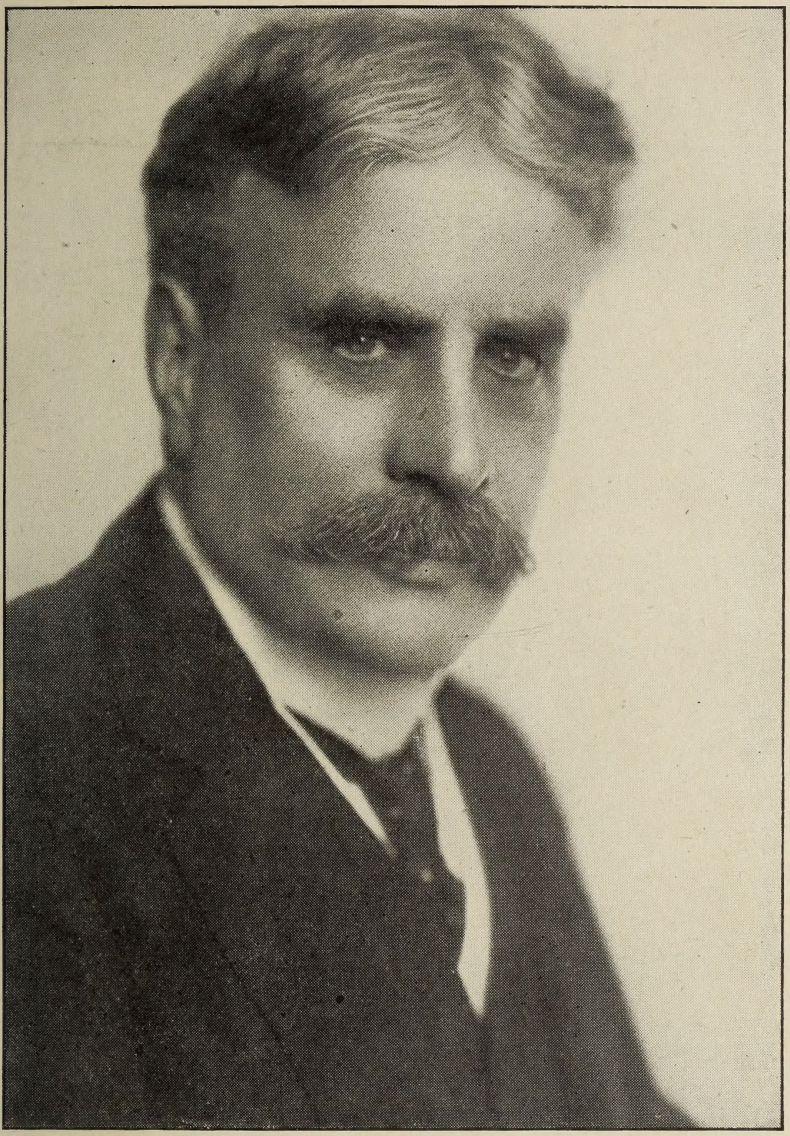
The EDITH *and* LORNE PIERCE
COLLECTION *of* CANADIANA

Queen's University at Kingston



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Speech delivered by Sir Robert Laird Borden, in the House of Commons, on the Imperial War Cabinet, 1917, the Imperial War Conference, 1917, and announcing the policy of Compulsory Military Enlistment, May 18th, 1917.[1]

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Mr. Speaker, as hon. members of this House are aware, on the 20th December last the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom summoned the Prime Ministers of the overseas Dominions to meet in London with the members of the British Cabinet in conference. The proposed gathering was designated the Imperial War Cabinet. The purposes of the conference, as detailed in the telegram which was received, were to take counsel with each other: First, as to matters connected with the prosecution of the war; Second, as to the terms upon which peace might be made; Third, as to the problems which would arise immediately after the conclusion of peace.

Parliament was summoned at an earlier date than was at first intended in order that the representatives of Canada might arrive in Great Britain at the time designated. It was at that time proposed that the first meeting of the Imperial War Cabinet should be held during the last week of February. We left Ottawa on the 12th day of February and arrived in London on the 23rd day of that month. Unfortunately, through delay in the arrival of the representatives of India and of South Africa, the formal proceedings of the Imperial War Cabinet did not commence until a somewhat later date. We left Canada at a very interesting time. Ger-

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(1) On May 15, 1917, Sir Robert Borden returned to Ottawa from London, England, where he had been summoned to attend the Imperial War Cabinet, 1917, and the Imperial War Conference, 1917. The above statement was made for the purpose of informing the House of Commons of the transactions of these bodies. In concluding this statement, Sir Robert Borden announced the adoption by the Government of a policy of compulsory military enlistment on a selective basis to provide the necessary reinforcements for the Canadian Army Corps at the front.

many had announced, just two weeks before, the commencement of an unprecedented and ruthless submarine campaign, and we had the experience in crossing the Atlantic of driving through fog at full speed without lights and without the sound of any fog horn, a course which in time of peace would be regarded as madness itself, if not absolutely criminal. I mention this to indicate to hon. gentlemen in this House the conditions under which ocean travel must now be undertaken, and as an object lesson in the perils to British and Allied shipping through the waging of this campaign, of which I shall have something more to say at a subsequent stage of my remarks.

We all greatly regretted the fact that Australia could not be represented in the Imperial War Cabinet or in the Imperial War Conference. For some time after our arrival it was expected that the representatives of Australia would arrive before the proceedings had been concluded, and it was proposed that the consideration of all important matters, in which Australia was especially interested, should be delayed until their arrival. However, as it turned out, the representatives of Australia were not able to attend, and under the circumstances the best that could be done was to inform the Australian Ministry from day to day of the proceedings of the Imperial War Cabinet and the Imperial War Conference, and especially with the nature of any resolutions or proposals in which the Commonwealth of Australia might be especially concerned.

Although there was some delay the Canadian representatives did not find the time hanging heavily on their hands. There were certain meetings of the British Cabinet which we attended before the formal meetings commenced on the 20th March; and in the meantime we utilized every opportunity to visit Canadian camps and hospitals, to visit the troops in France, and to take up very many matters of importance, and some of them of urgency, in connection with the prosecution of the war.

The first meeting of the Imperial War Cabinet was held on Tuesday, the 20th March, and the first meeting of the Imperial War Conference was held on Wednesday, the 21st March. Six meetings were held in each week, three of the Imperial War Cabinet and three of the Imperial War Conference, and except for a short recess at Easter this continued until our visit was concluded. I am not confident that it was originally intended to hold an Imperial War Conference as well as an Imperial War Cabinet; but after the proposal for

holding an Imperial War Cabinet had been launched, it became obvious that there were certain matters more or less connected with the war which might, with advantage, be thus discussed in conference between the representatives of the United Kingdom and representatives of the oversea Dominions and of India.

The genesis of the Imperial War Cabinet is to be found in the events of this war. Every one has realized the somewhat anomalous position of the self-governing nations of the Empire in respect of questions which concern foreign policy and foreign relations. It is abundantly clear that the self-governing Dominions are vitally interested in those questions which involve the issues of peace and war. In the event of a great war, threatening in any way the existence of our Empire or its status, the self-governing Dominions being at war when the Mother Country is at war must inevitably take their part; and thus they are directly concerned with the causes out of which war may arise. If we take an example from the events which have been transpiring during the past three years, we observe that some at least of the causes out of which this war sprang arose before this Dominion had an existence. We observe further that some of the causes for which our Empire took up arms were concerned with treaties and understandings in which the oversea Dominions of this Empire had no voice and no part; but Canada and the other Dominions engaged in this conflict, because they realized that the issues involved transcend all others within our experience, and concern the future of every Dominion, the future of the United Kingdom, and of the Empire as a whole, and, indeed, the future of the world.

And so, without any hesitation whatever, every self-governing Dominion took up arms, and India as well, and their participation has been whole hearted. Two years ago, in London, I said that the oversea Dominions of the Empire had sent to fight for the cause of justice and liberty in this war not less than 250,000 men. I said with equal truth in London not more than a month ago that those Dominions had called to arms in the present struggle not less than 1,000,000 men. So, under those conditions, and having regard to the part which the oversea Dominions of the Empire have taken, it was obviously necessary that the pledge given by the British Government in the early months of the war to consult the Dominions as to the terms of peace must be fulfilled in substantial measure. And as that question was to come under consideration, so also it was desirable and necessary that

questions of co-operation in the prosecution of the war and problems that will arise on its conclusion should also come under consideration by the British Cabinet and the representatives of the Dominions assembled in the first Imperial Cabinet ever held. The flexibility of the British constitution permitted this to be done. That constitution is based on usage developed slowly and gradually into convention. The Cabinet is not known to the formal enactments of the law, nor is the office of Prime Minister; and yet all of us realize how important, how supreme a place the Cabinet of Great Britain or of any of the Dominions has in the government of the country. And so with the office of Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. To it is attached a power and authority which, in events such as those through which we are passing, permit him to exercise that power and influence for great purposes made necessary by great events. And so the Prime Minister of Great Britain and Ireland called together the Prime Ministers of the oversea Dominions to sit in council with the five members of the British Cabinet. In taking that course he absolutely disregarded precedent. As he himself said most eloquently in his address at the Guildhall, this is not a time in which one could justify too rigid an adherence to precedent, or even to tradition. It is a remarkable fact in our history that constitutional development has seemed to depend more upon events than upon men. The events of this war made it absolutely essential that the Dominions should have the voice to which I have alluded, and, having that voice, it was natural, and more than that, necessary, that they should be assembled in an Imperial War Cabinet.

It was a remarkable body that was gathered together. First there were the members of the War Cabinet of the United Kingdom, the five men who constitute that Cabinet, but who call into counsel with them other members of the British Government whenever necessary. These five men, with representatives of India and of the Dominions, met for the purpose of dealing with matters of common concern touching the whole Empire. While we were in London and in the very early days of the sessions of the Imperial War Cabinet a further remarkable development took place. It also arose out of the necessity imposed by events, and I am thoroughly confident that it was not premeditated or designed when the Imperial War Cabinet was first summoned. The Crown acts in the United Kingdom and in all the self-governing Dominions of the Empire; it acts in the United Kingdom upon the advice of the Ministers of the United Kingdom; it acts in

each of the Dominions upon the advice of the appropriate Ministers—in federal affairs, upon the advice of federal Ministers; in provincial and state affairs, upon the advice of provincial and state Ministers. It is the same Crown throughout acting upon the advice of different Ministers. That tie of allegiance to the Crown is the tie which chiefly binds together the Empire today so far as constitutional considerations are concerned.

We sat on alternate days in the Imperial War Cabinet and in the Imperial War Conference. On days when the Imperial War Cabinet did not sit the war did not wait; therefore it was necessary that the British War Cabinet itself should sit on those days to deal with questions arising out of the war. This result, therefore, very early obtained: that the Imperial War Cabinet was differentiated from the British War Cabinet; that the Imperial War Cabinet sat for the purpose of dealing with all matters of common concern to the whole Empire, and the British War Cabinet sat for the purpose of dealing with those matters which chiefly concerned the United Kingdom.

There was for the first time in London an Imperial War Cabinet. But there was more than that. There were two Cabinets advising the Crown, one an Imperial War Cabinet advising the Crown in respect of matters of common Empire concern, and the other a British War Cabinet advising the Crown in respect of matters which chiefly concerned the affairs of the United Kingdom. I do not mean to suggest that this differentiation was absolute; it was carried out as best it could be carried out. I ventured to bring the subject to the attention of the statesmen of the United Kingdom and the people of the Empire in an address which I delivered in London before the Empire Parliamentary Association in the early weeks of my arrival there. The idea has so impressed itself upon the people of the United Kingdom, and upon their statesmen, that at the very last meeting of the Imperial War Cabinet a definite offer was made to the oversea Dominions that this experiment should be continued in the future; that it should develop into a usage and into a convention; and that annually at least, and, if necessity should arise, oftener, there should assemble in London an Imperial Cabinet to deal with matters of common concern to the Empire.

It is perfectly obvious that such a proposal cannot include the large Cabinet to which Great Britain may revert after this war is over. It is idle to speculate or to conjecture as to whether the present system of a very small number of

men in the Cabinet will continue; I think it likely that it will not continue. Therefore the future of this proposal will be a Cabinet of Governments rather than of Ministers; a Cabinet in which the Government of the United Kingdom, the Governments of the Dominions, and the Government of India will be represented. Having regard to the declarations of the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom and his colleagues, the proposal will carry with it much of advantage to the oversea Dominions. I say that for this reason: it is not proposed that the Government of the United Kingdom shall, in foreign affairs, act first and consult us afterwards. The principle has been definitely and finally laid down that in these matters the Dominions shall be consulted before the Empire is committed to any important policy which might involve the issues of peace or war. The language in which the Prime Minister of Great Britain conveyed his proposal to the Ministers from the Dominions made that abundantly clear. So, as I understand the proposal—and I think I understand it correctly—the British Cabinet shall continue to discharge its functions in respect to all matters relating to the United Kingdom, but there shall be also an Imperial Cabinet, in which not only the United Kingdom, but all the oversea Dominions shall be represented by their Governments.

The representatives of the United Kingdom will consist of the Prime Minister, the Foreign Secretary, the Secretary of State for India, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, and very probably the Secretary of State for War and the First Lord of the Admiralty. The representatives of the oversea Dominions will be their Prime Ministers, or if the Prime Minister is unable to attend, some Minister of first rank must attend in his place, who, for the time being, shall possess the authority and exercise the functions of the Prime Minister for that purpose. It is idle to have an Imperial Cabinet unless those who assemble around the council board are possessed of the authority for the time being to carry out the proposals which may be agreed to. It may be said, in criticism of this proposal, that what the Prime Minister of one of the Dominions might there agree to he could not afterwards carry out because the assent of Parliament might be withheld. That criticism, however, is equally applicable to any policy that a government might bring down, and, therefore, it does not seem to constitute a grave objection to the proposal which has been outlined by Mr. Lloyd George.

We all know that the future constitutional relations of the Empire have been a matter of much discussion in parlia-

ments, in the press, and by constitutional writers and others. We also know that men who have given thoughtful and careful study to the subject have been much perplexed as to what those future relations may be. We have, on the one hand, self-government enjoyed by each of the oversea Dominions; we have that autonomy of which they are rightly jealous. We have, on the other hand, the necessity of consultation and coöperation; and how to reconcile the aspirations of the oversea Dominions on the one side or on the other, to bring about unity and concentration of purpose in great matters of common concern and at the same time to safeguard the rights of self-government which the oversea Dominions at present enjoy, has been a matter involved in much difficulty and complexity. It seems to me that many of the difficulties are likely to be cleared away by the proposal of Mr. Lloyd George. I do not pretend to prophesy that this will be the ultimate form in which necessary consultation and coöperation will be brought about. It would be idle to pass any conjecture on that subject; so many prophecies have failed of fulfilment that one is naturally unwilling to commit himself to any prophecy on the subject. But this at least may be said of Mr. Lloyd George's proposal: it does not sacrifice in the slightest degree the autonomy or the power of self-government which is possessed by each of the Dominions. The Ministers from overseas go there as the heads of their Governments. They are responsible to their own Parliaments; as the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom goes there responsible to his Parliament.

They go there as the representatives of autonomous governments, each responsible to an independent Parliament. They meet there for the purpose of consultation, coöperation, and united action, but that action can be taken only with the sanction and authority of the representatives of the various nations of the Empire, assembled in their own Parliament. Therefore, there is no sacrifice of any existing power of self-government. There is, on the other hand, opportunity for consultation, coöperation and united action, which I venture to think will prove of great advantage to the Empire as a whole.

The deliberations of the Imperial War Cabinet were necessarily secret. They covered almost every conceivable subject connected with the prosecution of the war, the terms of peace, and the problems to arise after the conclusion of the war. I was greatly impressed with the enormous variety and vast complexity of the problems that have to be taken

into consideration by the British Government from day to day. I made it my business, when I first went to London, to go to the offices of the British War Cabinet for the purpose of examining the correspondence just for a single day. Before we arrived in London all precedents had been cast aside in the methods of the British War Cabinet. When, in 1915, I sat for the first time in that Cabinet, it was an unwritten law that no record should be made of its proceedings and that no member of the Cabinet should make any note of the conclusions arrived at. In Great Britain administration is not carried on in the same way as here. Our Cabinet is a committee of the Privy Council. Matters are dealt with in recorded form. We pass Orders in Council, sitting as a Cabinet, sitting, that is, as a Committee of the Privy Council. The meetings of the Privy Council in Great Britain are formal affairs, and the meetings of the Cabinet are absolutely apart and distinct from the formal meetings of the Privy Council in which no debate takes place and in which the proposals placed before the Privy Council are accepted as a matter of course. The British War Cabinet, as constituted when we arrived in Great Britain, kept a complete record of its proceedings; it had half a dozen secretaries at least, several of whom attended each meeting, resolutions were passed and conclusions were recorded in writing. All precedents of the past had been put to one side and entirely new methods had been adopted. Voluminous records are kept in the offices of the War Cabinet. The day I examined the correspondence of the War Cabinet I suppose there were at least 200 telegrams dealing with every conceivable subject, with matters arising in almost every country in the world, neutral, allied, or enemy. There were questions arising in all parts of the world—from every country in the world there pours in from day to day correspondence regarding matters requiring the attention, not only of the Foreign Office, but of almost every department of the British Government. I am bound to confess that my visit to London gave me a wider and clearer view than I could otherwise possibly have obtained of the tremendous duties and responsibilities upon the British Government in this war.

So far as the deliberations of the Imperial War Cabinet are concerned I can speak of them only generally; they will be alluded to in my subsequent remarks. I might, however, be permitted to read to the House a letter which I addressed to Mr. Lloyd George on the 30th of April, shortly before my

departure from England, and the reply which I received from him. My letter reads:

Dear Mr. Lloyd George,—

As we are about returning to Canada I desire to express the thanks of the Canadian ministers for the courtesy and consideration extended to us on all occasions and for the opportunities afforded to make ourselves fully acquainted with the highly important subjects which have come under consideration in the Imperial War Cabinet. The deliberations in which we have taken part have made us realize more fully the vastness and complexity of the problems involved in the successful prosecution of the war and in the determination of the conditions on which peace might be made.

While our absence from Canada has been greater than we anticipated or desired, we realize that the purpose for which we crossed the Atlantic could not have been accomplished within a shorter period.

The step which you have taken in summoning the Imperial War Cabinet is a notable advance in the development of constitutional relations, and I am confident that the usage thus initiated will gradually but surely develop into a recognized convention.

I pray that the united effort of our Imperial Commonwealth may speedily be rewarded with such decisive victory as will assure an abiding peace. Believe me,

Yours faithfully,
(Sgd.) R. L. BORDEN.

To which Mr. Lloyd George replied on the 2nd of May:

My dear Sir Robert,—

I am very much obliged to you for your kind letter of April 30.

I should like to say how much we have appreciated the promptitude with which you accepted our invitation to attend the meetings of the Imperial War Cabinet under circumstances which involved a grave measure of risk for yourself and your colleagues, and our request that you should delay your departure until all the important business which had to come before us had been concluded. I feel, however, that you will agree with me in thinking that the work which the Imperial War Cabinet has done has amply justified the requests which we have made of you. I cordially agree with what you say about the importance of its meetings. If they have been of value to you, we have found them of not less value to ourselves.

It has been of immense advantage to bring to bear upon the vital problems of war and peace fresh minds and fresh angles of vision from the Overseas Dominions. I believe that this new experiment will prove, as you suggest, a permanent convention of our constitution, for its recent meetings have unquestionably contributed not only to unity of purpose among the peoples of the Empire, but to the vigour with which we hope to prosecute the war and the clear-sightedness with which we shall enter upon the negotiations for peace.

Yours sincerely,
(Sgd.) D. LLOYD GEORGE.

Sir Sam Hughes: I do not understand from my right hon. friend's remarks the duties or the functions of the present

British Cabinet. As I understand it, there is an Imperial War Cabinet, a British War Cabinet and a British Cabinet. What are the functions of the British War Cabinet as distinct from those of the British Cabinet, and the Imperial War Cabinet?

Sir Robert Borden: The Imperial War Cabinet advise the Crown in respect to all matters connected with the prosecution of the war. The British War Cabinet advise the Crown more especially in matters concerning the work of the United Kingdom in the war.

Sir Sam Hughes: That is not the British War Cabinet.

Sir Robert Borden: We call it the British War Cabinet. The "British War Cabinet" and the "British Cabinet" are interchangeable terms. In Great Britain it is called the War Cabinet. I alluded to it as the British War Cabinet for that reason.

Sir Sam Hughes: I understand that ministers who are not members of the British War Cabinet are nevertheless members of a general British Cabinet.

Sir Robert Borden: My hon. friend overlooks the fact that in Great Britain all the members of the Government are not members of the cabinet.

Sir Sam Hughes: I know that.

Sir Robert Borden: The cabinet has been made a very small one of only five members, two of whom have no portfolios.

Sir Sam Hughes: That is the point I want to make clear.

Sir Robert Borden: The other members of the British Government are not members of the British Cabinet, but they are called into consultation in the British Cabinet whenever matters especially concerning their departments come up for consideration. In the future, however, when the British Cabinet will probably be larger than it is today, the Imperial Cabinet will include, not the whole British Cabinet, but certain selected ministers, that is to say: the Prime Minister, the Foreign Secretary, the Secretary of State for War, the First Lord of the Admiralty, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, and the Secretary of State for India. They will represent the British Cabinet in the Imperial War Cabinet, and the Dominions will be represented in that cabinet by their Prime Ministers.

As to the Imperial War Conference: some of its deliberations and resolutions are for the present confidential and will not be published at once, but the greater portion has been made

public. A blue book is now in preparation, and as soon as it is received it will of course be placed upon the table of the House and printed for the use of members. The subjects under consideration included the constitution of the Empire, the development and control of natural resources, Imperial preference, coördination of military equipment and stores, production of naval and military munitions and supplies, naval defence, care of soldiers' graves, naturalization, representation of India at future Imperial Conferences, the position of Indians in the self-governing dominions, removal of temptations to which overseas troops are now exposed, the trade commissioners' service, patents and other subjects.

The question of constitutional readjustment naturally came up for consideration. I think it is advisable that I should speak of that in the first instance, although it was not the first resolution passed. I shall not speak in detail of all the resolutions, but shall allude to only the more important ones, and if any discussion is required as to the others, it can more conveniently be had after we have the full record of the proceedings of the Conference before us, so far as they can be made public. I called into informal consultation the Ministers from the other Dominions and we discussed the question of constitutional readjustment pretty fully and carefully among ourselves. In the end we found that we were not very far apart in our views, and in the net result I had the honour of moving in the Conference this resolution. I should say at this point that all the proposals which have been put forward by the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom with regard to an Imperial Cabinet are subject to the conclusions which may eventually be reached by the Conference mentioned in this resolution, which is as follows:

> The Imperial War Conference are of opinion that the readjustment of the constitutional relations of the component parts of the Empire is too important and intricate a subject to be dealt with during the war, and that it should form the subject of a special Imperial Conference to be summoned as soon as possible after the cessation of hostilities. They deem it their duty, however, to place on record their view that any such readjustment, while thoroughly preserving all existing powers of self-government and complete control of domestic affairs, should be based upon a full recognition of the Dominions as autonomous nations of an Imperial Commonwealth, and India as an important portion of the same, should recognize the right of the Dominions and of India to an adequate voice in foreign policy and in foreign relations, and should provide effective arrangements for continuous consultation in all important matters of common Imperial concern, and for such necessary concerted action, founded on consultation, as the several governments may determine.

Now, I am aware that some criticism from a certain standpoint may be made of that proposal, because it may be urged that it does not lead to a sufficiently close organization of the Empire. There have been proposals put forward for an Imperial Parliament which should have taxing powers for certain purposes over all the Dominions as well as over the United Kingdom. As far as I am concerned, and I think the other members of the Conference thoroughly concurred in this view, I regard that proposal as neither feasible nor wise.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Sir Robert Borden: I venture to think that the Dominions have done more for the common cause that we all have at heart in this war than could have been accomplished by any Imperial Parliament possessing the powers to which I have alluded.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Sir Robert Borden: And I think that the best guarantee of what the Dominions are prepared to do for a common purpose in the future is the record of what they have done during the past three years. I should say this, however, in justice to those who have been advocating different views with great ability and with great earnestness: that I do think all the parliaments and peoples of the Empire are greatly indebted to the groups of young men in the Mother Country and throughout the Empire who have taken up this subject and studied it and issued many able publications with regard to it. Their work has been most earnest, unselfish and devoted, and it has had this good effect: it has concentrated the opinion of the great mass of the people upon these problems of great common concern. So while I am unable to accept some of the conclusions which they have reached, I nevertheless feel that the Empire lies under a debt of gratitude for the work which they have done in that regard.

This resolution was accepted unanimously by the Conference. I am happy to say that from first to last in all the proceedings of the Conference there was not one dissenting voice from any conclusion which the Conference reached. Every conclusion was absolutely unanimous, and I think this was perhaps due to the fact that certain subjects which did involve difficulty were first taken up informally in private discussion, and a conclusion was thus reached.

I should say this, further: A special Imperial Conference is to be summoned immediately after the war for the purpose of considering constitutional readjustment. I raised the question, and so did others, as to the constitution of that Conference.

I entertained the view, and I know that it was shared by others, that such a Conference should include representatives of the recognized political parties in all the Dominions of the Empire. This is too great a question to be made a matter of party controversy, and if I should have anything to do with the selection of the representatives of Canada at that special Conference I desire now to say, without any qualification, that I should ask the leaders of the opposite party to go with me to that Conference, so that we might take counsel with each other and with the other members of the Conference as to these vital questions.

The next subject to which I shall allude is the development and control of natural resources. This resolution was regarded as of some importance. I proposed it to the Conference, and at the request of the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom it was brought into the Imperial War Cabinet and discussed there. It was unanimously adopted both by the Imperial War Cabinet and by the Imperial War Conference. Its terms are as follows:

> Having regard to the experience obtained in the present war, this Conference records its opinion that the safety of the Empire and the necessary development of its component parts, require prompt and attentive consideration as well as concerted action with regard to the following matters:—
>
> 1. The production of an adequate food supply and arrangements for its transportation when and where required, under any conditions that may reasonably be anticipated.
>
> 2. The control of natural resources available within the Empire, especially those that are of an essential character for necessary national purposes, whether in peace or in war.
>
> 3. The economical utilization of such natural resources through processes of manufacture carried on within the Empire.
>
> The Conference commends to the consideration of the Governments summoned thereto the enactment of such legislation as may assist this purpose.

It is beyond question that when this war broke out the Germans were utilizing for their own purposes—their own national purposes, the building up of their industries—natural resources from many parts of our Empire, and in some instances natural resources which could not be obtained in the same abundance and of the same quality elsewhere. I venture to think, and I have so stated in the United Kingdom itself, that Germany had a better knowledge and conception of the natural resources of the Dominions of this Empire than was to be found in the United Kingdom before the war. I have little doubt of that, and if you had the opportunity of hearing what was recounted to me from other Dominions you would have little doubt. I will give one incident with regard to our own country which was brought to my attention the day I left Canada. The president of a Canadian company which has vast mineral resources on the

island of Newfoundland told me that about two months before the war he was in Germany and had occasion to call upon one of the managers of Krupps. Reference was made to these mineral resources, and the gentleman to whom I have referred spoke of their development. The manager rang a bell, called in a clerk, and to the Canadian's great surprise the clerk placed before them a plan of the workings at Belle Isle, which not only showed those workings as they were when he had left Canada a month or two before, but even showed the developments which had taken place during his absence. This gives one an idea of the thoroughness with which the Germans watch the development of our natural resources and of their methods. I venture to think that this resolution, which has commended itself to the Imperial War Cabinet and the Imperial War Conference, will also commend itself to the Parliament and people of Canada. We have resources so varied and abundant within this Empire that we need not fear any effort Germany may make to dominate the world commercially or industrially after the war. But I have absolutely no doubt that such an effort will be made by the Germans, and, indeed, there is the most reliable information that systematic arrangements for that purpose are being carried on in Germany today. If we have anything like the same resourcefulness, the same thoroughness, the same self-confidence, the same courage as they have put into their efforts in the past and will put into their efforts in the future, we have nothing to fear. The resources of this Empire are beyond all comparison greater than any that Germany can command. She cannot dominate the world commercially or industrially any more than she can dominate it by her military power.

The next resolution to which I call attention is one concerning Imperial preference. This resolution was brought forward by Mr. Massey, in the first instance at the Imperial War Conference, and was afterwards with some amendments approved by the Imperial War Cabinet.

The time has arrived when all possible encouragement should be given to the development of Imperial resources, and especially to making the Empire independent of other countries in respect of food supplies, raw materials, and essential industries. With these objects in view this Conference expresses itself in favour of:—

1. The principle that each part of the Empire, having due regard to the interests of our Allies, shall give specially favourable treatment and facilities to the produce and manufactures of other parts of the Empire.

2. Arrangements by which intending emigrants from the United Kingdom may be induced to settle in countries under the British flag.

I should say at once that this resolution does not necessarily purpose, or even look to, any change in the fiscal arrangements of the United Kingdom. It does not involve taxation of food; it does not involve taxation of anything. As far as the fiscal system of the United Kingdom is concerned I followed when in England precisely the same course that I have carried out in this Parliament and in this country—I declined to interfere in matters which are of domestic concern and should be the subject of domestic control in the United Kingdom. I declined to invite them to change their fiscal policy. These matters are within their control, as our fiscal policy is within ours. And I would go further and say that the people of Canada would not desire the people of the United Kingdom to change their fiscal policy for the purpose alone of giving a preference to the producers of this country, especially if the proposed fiscal changes should involve any supposed injustice, should be regarded as unfair or oppressive by a considerable portion of the people of the United Kingdom. But what this proposal looks to, as I understand it, is this—that we can within this Empire establish better and cheaper facilities of communication than we have enjoyed up to the present time. That, I believe, is the line along which the change indicated will proceed. The question of transportation has been a very live one, a very important one, to the producers of this country, especially those of the western provinces. We know that before the commencement of the war the cost of transportation across the Atlantic increased twofold or threefold. There was sometimes a dearth of ships. I hope and believe that there will be concerted action and coöperation between the government of the United Kingdom and the governments of the Dominions, by which speedier, better and more economical transportation will be provided between the Mother Country and the Dominions, and between the Dominions themselves. So in this light I am confident that the resolution passed by the Conference will receive favourable consideration by the people of this country.

The next resolution I will take up deals with the question of naval defence. The resolution unanimously adopted is as follows:

> That the Admiralty be requested to work out immediately after the conclusion of the war what they consider the most effective scheme of Naval Defence for the Empire for the consideration of the several Governments summoned to this Conference, with such recommendations as the Admiralty consider necessary in that respect for the Empire's future security.

It would be impossible to do that during the war; the Admiralty frankly told us so. In the first place they are

too busy, and, in the second place, they desire to learn thoroughly the lessons of this war before they reach conclusions that they would commend to the oversea governments. The development of submarine warfare during the past three years has been so important and so serious as to cause the authorities of the Admiralty to reconsider more or less the whole position. But we do believe that after the war is over it will be necessary for the United Kingdom and the Dominions to take up this question in coöperation and with a view to concerted action. For that purpose the Admiralty will prepare, with the least possible delay after the war is over, a scheme by which we can act together for this great common purpose.

I do not need, I hope, in the presence of hon. gentlemen in this House, to emphasize the importance and necessity of this. It is obvious that if the communications of this Empire on the ocean are cut the Empire cannot hold together. That is apparent and clear to all. It is a matter of congratulation to us that although there is a serious menace in the submarine campaign which Germany has carried on, this has been met with at least some success up to the present, and I hope it will be met with still more success in the future. Outside of the submarine campaign we all rejoice that the ocean was swept practically clear of the German flag within a few months after war broke out. That is a great achievement. It means as much for us as it does for the people of the United Kingdom. What enables our producers, what has enabled them during the past three years, to send their products at greatly increased prices across the ocean for the sustenance and comfort of the people of the United Kingdom and for the purpose of carrying on this war? It is the organized power of the British Empire in the Navy—that, and that alone. What is it that keeps Quebec, Montreal, Halifax, St. John, Victoria and Vancouver from being raided by enemy cruisers, from seeing women and children murdered in their streets by German shells and from all the horrors and barbarities that even some of the towns in the United Kingdom have suffered? I say again that it is the organized power of the Empire in our Navy. Therefore, it is a matter of concern to us, as to the United Kingdom, that the naval power of this Empire shall be kept up and increased in such measure that the ocean paths shall not be closed to us whether in peace or in war.

The next resolution to which I would invite your attention relates to the care of soldiers' graves, a most sacred duty devolving upon the people of the Empire. The resolution which was passed in regard to that is as follows:

The Conference, having considered the minute addressed to the Prime Minister on the 15th March, 1917, by His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, concurs in the proposals made therein, and humbly prays His Majesty to constitute by Royal Charter an Imperial War Graves Commission for the purposes stated by His Royal Highness, and along the lines therein set forth as embodied in the draft charter submitted to the Conference. The Conference places on record its very deep appreciation of the generous action of the French Government in allotting in perpetuity the land in that country where our men are buried, and urges that similar arrangements should be made, if possible, in the terms of peace with all governments—ally, enemy, or neutral—for a similar concession in Gallipoli, Mesopotamia, Africa, and all other theatres of war. The Conference desires to record its grateful appreciation of the work already done by the Prince of Wales and his Committee in caring for the graves of those who have fallen in the common cause of the Empire, and its satisfaction that His Royal Highness has consented to become President of the permanent Commission.

The Commission will be constituted of representatives of the United Kingdom and the oversea Dominions and they will be charged with the care of the soldiers' graves. I should say that France generously offered to undertake the care of the graves of all the soldiers of the Empire who were buried within her territory. With the most grateful appreciation of that fine, that splendid offer on the part of the French nation, it was thought better that we should ourselves undertake that sacred duty. So it is to be. The Commission will have full power and jurisdiction to deal with all these matters. It is hoped that territory in neutral or in allied countries where our men are buried may be secured, and it is proposed that whatever expense is necessary for this sacred purpose shall be undertaken by the Mother Country and by the Dominions upon some satisfactory basis. In the early future the Royal Charter will be issued, the Commission will be constituted and the work, which has already received care and attention, will be carried out upon the lines indicated.

The next resolution is that relating to the representation of India. I moved this resolution and I have no doubt that the course which the Conference took was absolutely wise. The resolution is as follows:

That the Imperial War Conference desires to place on record its view that the resolution of the Imperial Conference of 20th April, 1907, should be modified to permit of India being fully represented at all future Imperial Conferences, and that the necessary steps should be taken to secure the assent of the various Governments in order that the next Imperial Conference may be summoned and constituted accordingly.

I should read in connection with that another resolution in regard to India as to which a word might be said. It is this:

That the Imperial War Conference, having examined the memorandum on the position of Indians in the self-governing Dominions presented by the Indian representatives to the Conference, accepts the principle of reciprocity of treatment between India and the Dominions and recommends the memorandum to the favourable consideration of the Governments concerned.

As far as the representation of India is concerned, I am absolutely confident that it will be productive of good. I had more than one illustration of that during the Conference itself. The Indian representatives were the Maharaja of Bikaner, one of the native Indian princes and a man of splendid loyalty and devotion, who governs his country along progressive lines, and who has contributed in every possible way to the winning of this war. Another member was Sir Satyendra Sinha, who is a member of the Executive Council of the Viceroy of India, a man of notable learning, experience and ability and of great fairness and moderation as well. The third was Sir James Meston, the Lieutenant-Governor of the United Provinces, who has had a distinguished career as a civil servant in India, and who also is a man of commanding ability and wide experience. I found it of very great advantage in discussing matters of common concern to India and ourselves that we had the representatives of India at the Conference. I invited the members of the Conference to meet informally at the hotel at which I was staying, and we had a free, full and frank discussion of the whole situation in so far as the Dominions are concerned. India has had matters of difference, matters sometimes of controversy with South Africa, perhaps also with Australia and New Zealand, and on some occasions with Canada. Sir Satyendra Sinha stated the case from the Indian standpoint with great ability and fairness, conspicuous moderation and very deep feeling. His address to us was not the less impressive because it was so fair and so moderate. On our part we spoke with equal moderation. The net result was the resolution at which we arrived, and which I have read. Its basis is the idea that the self-respect of India shall be maintained by an agreement that whatever measures we enforce in regard to the emigration or the visits of Indians to Canada shall also prevail with regard to the emigration or visits of Canadians to India.

I do not think that any one in this House can dispute the fairness of that proposal. Upon certain other matters which we discussed I need not dwell today. I see nothing but good in the presence of India at that Conference, and I believe that there will be no objection in this House or in this country to having that great dependency of the Empire represented at future meetings. India has been splendidly loyal in this war

and has contributed of her manhood and of her treasure for the purpose of enabling us to win it. We must take that all into account. Her civilization is different from ours; it is more ancient; in some respects it may be said to be on a higher plane, perhaps—

Sir Wilfrid Laurier: Hear, hear.

Sir Robert Borden: There is more idealism in their civilization; more perhaps of materialism in ours. I am not disposed to discuss the question as to whether the one or the other civilization is superior; but I do say that the Indian civilization is entitled to our respect, and that we must do our part in making the inhabitants of that great dependency of the Empire feel that they are not treated with contumely or injustice by the people of any of the Dominions. I believe that purpose will be carried out; I believe it will be materially assisted by the Conference which we had with the Indian representatives.

The question of double income tax was also taken up. I need not read the resolution, which has been made public. It was very fully and forcibly discussed, and in the end a resolution was adopted which looks to action by the British Government immediately after the conclusion of the war.

We took up also the question of protection to oversea soldiers from certain temptations, and to the lack of adequate action on the part of the home authorities. If there was one subject on which I did express myself with unusual vigour, it was on that particular subject. I am bound to say that I do not think sufficient care or attention has been given to this subject by the Imperial authorities, and I very frankly told them so. There was an earnest promise of redress in that regard, a promise of more adequate protection and the removal of temptation; and I venture to hope with confidence that the action which we took in the Imperial Conference on that subject will be productive of good results.

In the Imperial War Conference we also took up the cattle embargo, which has been a source of irritation to the people of this country for many years past. I do not hesitate to say, what I said in the Conference and what has been many times said, that if the United Kingdom desire, for the protection of any industry in the United Kingdom, to keep Canadian cattle out of that country, we have not the slightest objection to their doing so. But we want them to do it directly, and not indirectly. We consider that, if the embargo is maintained for any such purpose, as I took the liberty of asserting, it is a great injustice to Canada that it should be maintained, and it ought to be

removed. I said to them: If you desire to keep our cattle out pass a law to keep them out; keep your own course with regard to your own fiscal matters, with regard to your productions; we do the same with regard to ours, and we are perfectly content that you should do the same with yours; but do not, on the pretence that our cattle are diseased, keep them out for any such purpose. I am not at liberty to make any announcement on the subject today beyond this, that the representations which we made were received as favourably as we could have expected by the head of the Department of Agriculture, Mr. Prothero. I must allude, in that connection, to the great service which was rendered in this matter by my colleague, Mr. Rogers, who, at my request, took the subject up immediately on his arrival in Great Britain. He was indefatigable in carrying out the purpose that we had at heart; he brought it up in the Conference, argued it with great earnestness and ability, and eventually succeeded in having the Minister of Agriculture come to the Conference for the purpose of a frank discussion of the whole question. After that discussion had taken place we received the very favourable indication to which I have already alluded.

In addition to the work of the Imperial War Cabinet and the Imperial War Conference, we were very actively engaged in many other matters relating to the war. There were all conceivable questions with regard to its prosecution, to which I have already alluded. We had to take up the question of naval protection during the war, we had to take up many questions with regard to the Canadian Expeditionary Force, with regard to the provision of shipping, food supply, the restriction of imports, and a score of other questions which arose from time to time and which kept us most actively engaged. I believe that there was some suspicion in this country that the oversea Ministers were occupying their time in enjoying themselves, and were not very actively engaged. I have been accustomed to reasonably hard work all my life, but I venture to say to the members of this House and to the people of this country that I never worked more incessantly or more actively during any like period than I did during the period I was in England. That, I think, is equally true of my colleagues. Mr. Rogers attended the meetings of the Empire Land Settlement Committee, to which not only he, but representatives of all the provinces of Canada were appointed while we were in London. He took up also questions relating to the purchase of Canadian wheat and cheese, the provision of dry docks in Canada, and other important subjects, and in connection with many good progress was made.

Mr. Hazen was in continual conference with the Admiralty

and the Minister of Shipping with respect to the provision of tonnage, Atlantic coast patrol, restriction of imports from Canada, and the requisitioning of Canadian ships by the Admiralty. He served on a very important sub-committee of the Imperial War Cabinet. Both he and Mr. Rogers interested themselves actively in all matters affecting the welfare of the Canadian forces.

Sir George Perley attended all the meetings of the War Cabinet and of the War Conference and was of invaluable assistance throughout in all the matters to which I have alluded.

We also were in conference with several departments of the British Government and with General Macdougall, of the Canadian Forestry Corps, as well, respecting the utilizing of certain Canadian products, such as cars, locomotives and lumber. General Macdougall took a very keen interest in all such matters and credit should be given to him for his zeal and activity in promoting Canadian interests in that way. We also took up the question of exchanging Canadian soldiers and civilians interned or imprisoned in Germany and the amelioration of their lot, and we did everything that seemed possible of accomplishment.

I have spoken of my visit to France. It might interest members of this House if I should say a few words about the Canadian Army Corps and its achievements during the past six months. After our visit to France, all the members of the Conference were invited by the French Government to visit Paris, where they proposed to receive and entertain us; but owing to the necessity of returning to Canada with the least possible delay, we were unable to accept the invitation, and, so far as I know, none of the representatives of the Dominions will be able to accept. I regret this because I should greatly have liked to take a message from this Parliament and from the people of Canada to the French Government and the French nation, assuring them of our admiration for the splendid courage, patience and fortitude with which they have endured this war and all that it has meant to that nation. No one can realize it who has not been in France and has not seen the devastation that has been wrought there. I was opposite Vimy Ridge early in March with the Canadian Army Corps. I went in the first place to visit the Canadian Corps, and the next day I was at British Headquarters and at French Headquarters. On a third or fourth day I was on the Somme battlefield and saw there some of the territory that had been wrested from the Germans

by the valour of the Canadian troops. When I was in France in July, 1915, there was one Canadian division at the front. I then had the honour and privilege of seeing the Canadian troops and of speaking to them at that time near "Plugstreet," opposite Messines. When I was in France on this occasion, twenty months afterwards, there were four Canadian divisions at the front, a full army corps—up to strength, and then 6,000 over strength. There were 130,000 Canadian troops in France when I was there, if one includes the lines of communication units, the Canadian Cavalry Brigade, the Canadian Railway Construction Corps and the Canadian Forestry Corps. I need not speak to you of their record; the record speaks for itself. I was there during the preparation for the Vimy fight and I saw the men rehearsing the work which they were to undertake. It was a splendid compliment to the Canadian troops that they were selected to make that attack upon a ridge which had been assaulted many times, but had never been taken; and it is even a greater tribute to the valour, the discipline and the resourcefulness of those troops that they took Vimy Ridge without being stopped once in their attack. I saw the plan of the operations. We knew that the attack was coming, but we did not know when it was coming. We were full of apprehension, because, as I have said, the ridge had been assaulted many times, but every attack had been repulsed with great loss. It must be said, however, that never was an attack upon Vimy Ridge or upon any other position preceded by such tremendous artillery preparation as that which preceded the Vimy attack. General Smuts, distinguished both as a soldier and as a statesman, who was in France on the day when the artillery preparation began and during part of the following day, told me that in the history of modern warfare there was nothing approaching the bombardment with which that attack was heralded. He said something further which may be of interest to this House: that he had called for the records showing the amount of munitions on hand after that bombardment had proceeded for 24 hours, and he had been astonished to find the arrangements so excellent that they had more shells on hand than when they commenced the bombardment. Canadians at the front, in the British Islands, and I hope, everywhere, have learned the value of discipline. They have learned that discipline is necessary in an army, and I believe that it was because of their good discipline, as well as of the confidence reposed in them by their officers, that that attack was so successful. The plans which I saw showed the

German trenches extending very far back, our own line of trenches not extending to anything like the same depth. One plan showed the objectives to be attained. Another showed the arrangements for the barrage, beginning at 5.30 in the morning—zero, they called it—then proceeding at intervals of five minutes until the division on the right was to attain its final objective at half past two. They went on with the barrage in front of them—just as I had seen them rehearsing it; going on behind a line of men with rifles at the slope, representing the barrage. They went on, and at 2.26 the division on the right, which had the furthest to go in gaining its objective, was able to telephone back seven miles, over wires laid while the battle was being waged, informing those in charge of the guns that they could lift the barrage, as the troops were all ready to occupy their final objective at half past two. Behind one of the divisions a number of pioneers were going forward laying their wires. They found a German tunnel. It was safer inside than outside; they went in. While laying their wire in the tunnel they discovered a number of Germans. The pioneers are not supposed to be a combatant force, but they are always ready for a fight; so there was a fight, with the result that the Germans were overpowered. It is recorded that a sergeant of the pioneers marched proudly back with 16 German prisoners and claimed from the enclosure a receipt showing that they had been taken by the pioneers. In the tunnel mines were found ready to be exploded until the pioneers cut the wires.

I may, perhaps, be pardoned if I give to the House a short extract from a document which was placed in my possession by an officer who came over with me in the same ship. It is a fairly full report from a German intelligence officer of the 79th German Reserve Division, and it contains information that the Germans had gathered with regard to this proposed attack. I shall read only one paragraph of it:

Spring Offensive. The spring offensive of the Entente that was to be expected will most probably be staged in this vicinity, perhaps with the intention of turning the Siegfried Line (Drocourt-Queant Line) and thereby defeat its purpose. North of Arras the British will be forced, according to the nature of the ground, to deliver a joint attack on the long narrow Vimy ridge, the possession of which gives them command of the high ground in this vicinity and would also be a safeguard against German attacks on the left British flank near Arras.

Opposed to the Division (79th Reserve) are Canadian troops. The 3rd Canadian Division on the right flank of the Division (79th Reserve Division) came into line about the middle of March. Recent identifications place the 2nd Canadian Division on the left divisional flank. The extreme flanks of the Canadian Corps have closed in towards the centre

so that the Canadian Corps now occupies a smaller front than it did a few weeks ago. The corps is now echelonned in depth and this formation points to operations on a large scale. Behind the front line near Mont St. Eloy extensive billets for troops have been erected and this also points to a strong concentration, and that troops are holding the front in depth. The Canadians are known to be good troops and are, therefore, well suited for assaulting. There are no deserters to be found amongst the Canadians.

I went to see Sir Douglas Haig at Headquarters, and I discussed with him matters of more or less importance relating to the Canadian Expeditionary Force.

When I proposed to return to England the next day, Sir Douglas Haig said to me: "I want you to go and look at the battlefield of the Somme, and I am sure you will come back convinced, as I am, that troops who could capture those positions, can take any position in the world. I want you to go there because some of your own troops have played an important part in that field of operations." I went there. We went through the town of Albert, which has often been spoken of in this House—where the Madonna and Child on the spire still lean over the roof of the ruined church. Among the peasants there is said to be a belief that the war will not end until the statue falls. The Germans deliberately turned their artillery on that church for weeks and finally struck the spire and the church itself is in ruins. We then came to a light railway which was built by the Canadian Railway Construction Corps, under the direction of General Jack Stewart, and I would like this House and the country to appreciate, more perhaps than they have yet done, the work that has been performed by the Canadian Expeditionary Force. The Canadians have played an important part, not only as combatants at the front, but in every sphere of operations. General Jack Stewart was sent for by the Headquarters staff of the Fifth Army not long ago. It was very important that a certain line of railway should be constructed with the least possible delay. The estimate made by experts as to the time required was that it would take six weeks, but it appeared if anything like that time should be necessary, the plan of operations would be absolutely interfered with. So General Stewart was called for and he undertook to examine the ground. He went and looked at it; he came back and said: "If you will give me two battalions of the Canadian Railway Construction Corps, I will undertake to build it in a week." He went on with the work and he built that line of railway in four days.

I went forward to the front on a light railway built by

the Canadian Railway Construction Corps across land that had been "No Man's Land," but that is now French land in the possession of the Allies. I have not the power to describe the condition of that country to the House; one must see it in order to realize it. We left that railway and then on a narrow tramway we entered small ammunition cars just large enough for a man to stand up in. We went up to the front past Courcelette, past Thiepval to a plateau beyond. To the right beyond Courcelette was Bapaume and immediately in front of it was the Loupart Wood. To our left was Irles, which had been taken the day before after a sharp fight. The guns behind us were bombarding the Loupart Wood and it was thought to be almost impregnable, but two days later the Germans scuttled out of it and it was ours. Courcelette was on our right. We afterwards returned to Thiepval which had been a beautiful French village. I cannot describe its present condition better than in these words, that it was simply a mass of churned-up mud. There was no sign of street, or house or habitation, no indication that a human being had ever dwelt there, except that in one or two places in the side of a shell crater one might see part of the foundation of a house. The whole country is like that. General Smuts in describing it to me remarked that the lip of each shell crater touched the lip of another. I am absolutely unable to understand how the British ever got their big guns over land in such condition or how our own men went forward when they took Vimy Ridge. It must be remembered that these shell craters were full of water, and men slipping in stood in danger of losing their lives and, I believe, some of them did lose their lives by drowning. The country defies description; it is churned-up earth and mud with a confusion of all kinds of debris. I saw six abandoned tanks to the left of the plateau beyond Thiepval. In Thiepval itself, there were German helmets lying around here and there and points of shells and every kind of debris, barbed wire and all the objects that are used in warfare under modern conditions. I was particularly proud to have the privilege of seeing Courcelette because the Canadians distinguished themselves in its capture, and in that attack and on other battlefields, no regiment bore itself more worthily than the 22nd French-Canadian regiment which did splendid work in every engagement in which it participated.

The Canadian Railway Construction Corps is performing work of the most vital importance. As far back as 1915 it was, I believe, suggested to the war authorities that railways

could be constructed behind the fighting line and utilized to great advantage. The matter was not taken up immediately; but it has been taken up since, and one of the chief requests that we received from the War Office while we were in England was for additional men for the Canadian Railway Construction Corps and for the Canadian Forestry Corps. What I have said of the Canadian Railway Construction Corps applies with equal force to the Canadian Forestry Corps. The work of these units is not so impressive, but is almost equally important as that of the combatant forces. It is absolutely necessary, as things are at present, that Great Britain should cut down to the utmost the tonnage for the conveyance of articles other than food supplies, and timber takes up an enormous quantity of tonnage. Therefore, in Great Britain and France forests are being sacrificed to-day on every hand, in order that the necessary timber for the prosecution of the war may be provided. It is universally admitted on the other side of the Atlantic that the Canadian Forestry Corps is most highly efficient, and the request to us is that we shall send men in as large numbers as possible to assist in the work which they are carrying on.

In Great Britain I visited eight camps in all: Shorncliffe, Crowborough, Shoreham, Seaford, Witley, Bramshott, Hastings, and in Windsor Great Park, a camp of the Canadian Forestry Corps. I found the men in good spirits, in good physical condition, and undergoing careful and effective training; at least it seemed to me excellent. I visited hospitals in Great Britain and France, and everywhere I found our men receiving, so far as I could see, the best of attention. I did not hear a complaint from any man in hospital, except from one man who complained to me that the Germans were not fighting fairly, because, he said, "when the Canadians climbed the Vimy Ridge, the Germans did not stand up to them, but ran away instead of fighting like men." I deemed it not only my duty, but my very great honour and privilege, to utilize every spare moment in seeing our men in the hospitals; and I saw only two men from Vimy Ridge who did not smile with great satisfaction when I spoke of their having driven the Germans back. Those men could not smile with their lips, by reason of their wounds, but they did smile with their eyes. Let me say to the members of this House and to the people of this country that no man wanting inspiration, determination or courage as to his duty in this war could go to any better place than the hospitals in which our Canadian boys are to be found. Their patience, pluck and cheerfulness

are simply wonderful. I saw some of those who are near and dear to members of this House in one of the London hospitals after that fight, the brother of one hon. member and the son of another, and I can tell those members that those young men were in fine form, in splendid spirit, proud and happy to have rendered the great service to their country which they were able to accomplish when the Vimy Ridge was captured.

There is another thing that should be mentioned, and that is the very, very great kindness of the British people to all our Canadian troops. I have been among them in camps and hospitals and elsewhere, and there was hardly a place I visited where I did not find visitors at the hospitals giving great care and attention to our wounded. The troops themselves realize with the greatest possible gratitude and appreciation the kindness and attention of all those among whom they are thrown, and I know the people of this country, when they realize it in the same way, will be inspired with the same sense of gratitude.

Certain representations have been made to me and also to the oversea authorities from time to time that the Canadian troops contract drinking habits while overseas. I made it my special business to inquire as to that. I inquired of General Turner, General Steele, and of General Child of the War Office, who has to deal with such matters, and I shall place their reports upon the Table afterwards: I shall not stop to read them now. It is enough to say that these reports indicate that such representations are almost absolutely without foundation. The Canadian troops are not addicted to the habit of drunkenness. It was represented to me by General Steele, in whose word I have absolute confidence, that there is less drinking among the Canadian troops than among any other troops in the United Kingdom, and I thoroughly believe that. Drinking is almost at a minimum. I think General Steele said that three men per thousand per week in the area under his command had been brought up on such a charge during a particular period, and that that was a fair average. General Steele said that he believed it was better to utilize the wet canteen than to permit the men to go to public houses near at hand. When troops go to the canteen they are necessarily under discipline and supervision. If there is no wet canteen, and the men go out to the public houses—and you cannot very well prevent them—they are not under the same discipline or supervision, and almost all the difficulty has arisen in that way, and not through the wet canteen.

So far as general war conditions are concerned—I am sorry

to have had to trespass so long on the attention of the House, but I am dealing with an important subject, and some of these matters that seem trivial may yet be of interest—all realize that there were great developments during our visit to Great Britain. We started almost immediately after the submarine campaign commenced, and while we were there the fortunes of war in many theatres of operations were very largely in favour of the Allied nations. There was a great victory in Mesopotamia. The offensive was assumed with marked success by the British armies in France and substantial advances were made. But I hope that hon. gentlemen in looking at the map will realize that the territory won by the offensive which commenced this spring is only an insignificant part of the Allied territory that is still held by the Germans. The overwhelming power of our artillery impressed me as very much greater in the fighting this spring than it was on the Somme. But a great struggle still lies before us in this war; that is the message I bring back to you from Great Britain and from the front.

A great struggle lies before us, and I cannot put that before you more forcibly than by stating that at the commencement of this spring's campaign Germany put in the field 1,000,000 more men than she put in the field last spring. The organization of the man-power of that nation has been wonderful. Awful as are the barbarities and methods which she has perpetrated and used, one cannot but admit that the organization of the national life of that country throws into the field absolutely the full power of the nation.

Sir Sam Hughes: Does that 1,000,000 include troops of other nations besides Germany, or Germans only?

Sir Robert Borden: It includes Germans only. Germany has managed so to organize her national life that she was able to put in the field at the commencement of this spring's campaign 1,000,000 more men than she put in the field at the commencement of her campaign last spring. That is the information that was given to me, and which I think it is my duty to place before the House, in order that the conditions at the front may be realized and understood. Now, I desire to speak with discretion and moderation in these matters, but I cannot too strongly emphasize my belief that a great effort still lies before the Allied nations if we are going to win this war, and it is absolutely inconceivable to me that we should not win this war. The unsettled political conditions in Russia undoubtedly have handicapped the effort on the eastern front, and thus enabled Germany to make a greater effort on the western front.

Against these considerations there is the fact that a great kindred and neighbouring nation has entered into the war on the Allied side, the United States of America. That important event, which took place during our absence, must exercise a tremendous effect, not only upon the issue of this war, but upon the future of the world. The fact that citizens of the United States are to fight side by side with the soldiers of our Empire cannot but have a splendid influence on the future of the two nations. Although the relations of the two countries have been good for many years, this notable event must do much to wipe out certain memories, and I know that the Canadian forces at the front will be delighted to fight side by side with those from the great Republic to the south. There are in the Canadian Expeditionary Force more than 9,000 men who give their next of kin as resident in the United States of America. I do not say that all these men have come directly from the United States; some of them may have emigrated to this country, leaving their relatives, or next of kin, on the other side of the line; but 9,000 who were undoubtedly born in the allegiance of the United States are now fighting in the Canadian Expeditionary Force.

But although the United States has entered this war, we do not know how long it will be before the tremendous power of that nation can be translated into military effort. It cannot be done in a few weeks; it cannot be done fully in a few months. We know that from our own experience; the British Government know it from their experience, and, therefore, it must not lead to any relaxation of effort on the part of the Empire, or on the part of any of the Allied nations.

I pause to say a few words about the submarine campaign. Perhaps its seriousness may not be realized by those who have not been brought closely in touch with events from week to week, and with confidential information which has been made available to those who have attended the Imperial War Cabinet.

I believe it will be met; I believe there is enough determination, enough resourcefulness, enough self-denial, and enough courage on the part of this Empire to meet it and to defeat it. But I would not be doing my duty if I did not emphasize its seriousness. I need not do more, in order to emphasize Germany's confidence in this campaign, than to say this—that in order to carry it on she risked war with the United States of America. That indicates her belief that the submarine war would bring the struggle to a conclusion before the United States could throw effectively its power into this contest. That is what she is trying to do now. The losses in ships have been

very serious indeed, and some of the losses of late have taken place under conditions which I cannot mention to the House, but which are sufficiently grave. The cry of Lloyd George, when he made his great speech in the Guildhall, was this: What we need in this war is ships, and then more ships, and then more ships still. It is the belief of the Germans that they can protract the war on the western front until their submarine campaign has made it necessary for Great Britain to accept terms of peace which none of us would listen to for a moment at present. As I have said, I do not believe Germany's attempt will succeed, but it will require courage, resolution, energy, self-denial and resourcefulness on the part of the people of the United Kingdom and of the Dominions if that attempt is to end in failure.

I have no confident hope that the war will end this year. Any conjecture as to the time when it will end is almost valueless. The effectiveness of Russia's effort on the eastern front, and the speed with which the power of the United States can be thrown into this struggle, will be great if not determining factors.

Now, as to our efforts in this war—and here I approach a subject of great gravity and seriousness, and, I hope, with a full sense of the responsibility that devolves upon myself and upon my colleagues, and not only upon us but upon the members of this Parliament and the people of this country. We have four Canadian divisions at the front. For the immediate future there are sufficient reinforcements. But four divisions cannot be maintained without thorough provision for future requirements. If these reinforcements are not supplied, what will be the consequence? The consequence will be that the four divisions will dwindle down to three, the three will dwindle to two, and Canada's efforts, so splendid in this war up to the present, will not be maintained as we desire it to be maintained. I think that no true Canadian, realizing all that is at stake in this war, can bring himself to consider with toleration or seriousness any suggestion for the relaxation of our efforts. The months immediately before us may be decisive. They may be decisive even if the war should not end this year. Germany is bringing into play during the present season the last ounce of her manhood. What have we done in this war? We have sent 326,000 men overseas in the Canadian Expeditionary Force. Including reservists in British and Allied armies, and men enlisted for naval defence, 360,000 men at least have left the shores of Canada. It is a great effort, but greater still is needed. Hitherto, we have depended upon voluntary enlistment. I myself stated to Parliament that nothing but voluntary enlistment was proposed by the

Government. But I return to Canada impressed at once with the extreme gravity of the situation, and with a sense of responsibility for our further effort at the most critical period of the war. It is apparent to me that the voluntary system will not yield further substantial results. I hoped that it would. The Government have made every effort within its power, so far as I can judge. If any effective effort to stimulate voluntary recruiting still remains to be made, I should like to know what it is. The people have coöperated with the Government in a most splendid manner along the line of voluntary enlistment. Men and women alike have interested themselves in filling up the ranks of regiments that were organized. Everything possible has been done, it seems to me, in the way of voluntary enlistment.

All citizens are liable to military service for the defence of their country, and I conceive that the battle for Canadian liberty and autonomy is being fought today on the plains of France and of Belgium. There are other places besides the soil of a country itself where the battle for its liberties and its institutions can be fought; and I venture to think that, if this war should end in defeat, Canada, in all the years to come, would be under the shadow of German military domination. That is the very lowest at which we can put it. I believe that this fact cannot be gainsaid.

Now, the question arises as to what is our duty. I repeat once more, a great responsibility rests upon those who are entrusted with the administration of public affairs. But they are not fit to be entrusted with that transcendent duty if they shrink from any responsibility which the occasion calls for. If the cause for which we fight is what we believe it to be, if the issues involved are those which have been repeatedly declared by all our public men and in all the press of Canada, I believe the time has come when the authority of the state should be invoked to provide reinforcements necessary to sustain the gallant men at the front who have held the line for months, who have proved themselves more than a match for the best troops that the enemy could send against them, and who are fighting in France and Belgium that Canada may live in the future. No one who has not seen the positions which our men have taken, whether at Vimy Ridge, at Courcelette, or elsewhere, can realize the magnitude of the task that is before them, or the splendid courage and resourcefulness which its accomplishment demands. Nor can any one realize the conditions under which war is being carried on. I have been somewhat in the midst of things at the front. Yet I feel that I cannot realize what the life in the trenches means, though I know that I can realize it better than those who have not been as near to the

front as I have been. I bring back to the people of Canada from these men a message that they need our help, that they need to be supported, that they need to be sustained, that reinforcements must be sent to them. Thousands of them have made the supreme sacrifice for our liberty and preservation. Common gratitude, apart from all other considerations, should bring the whole force of this nation behind them. I have promised, in so far as I am concerned, that this help shall be given. I should feel myself unworthy of the responsibility devolving upon me if I did not fulfil that pledge. I bring a message from them, yes, a message also from the men in the hospitals, who have come back from the very valley of the shadow of death, many of them maimed for life. I saw one of them who had lost both legs pretty well up to the hip and he was as bright, as cheerful, as brave, and as confident of the future as any one of the members of this House—a splendid, brave boy. But, is there not some other message? Is there not a call to us from those who have passed beyond the shadow into the light of perfect day, from those who have fallen in France and in Belgium, from those who have died that Canada may live—is there not a call to us that their sacrifice shall not be in vain?

I have had to take all these matters into consideration and I have given them my most earnest attention. I realize that the responsibility is a serious one, but I do not shrink from it. Therefore, it is my duty to announce to the House that early proposals will be made on the part of the Government to provide, by compulsory military enlistment on a selective basis, such reinforcements as may be necessary to maintain the Canadian army today in the field as one of the finest fighting units of the Empire. The number of men required will not be less than 50,000, and will probably be 100,000. These proposals have been formulated in part and they will be presented to the House with the greatest expedition that circumstances will permit. I hope that when they are submitted all the members of the House will receive them with a full sense of the greatness of the issue involved in this war, with a deep realization of the sacrifice that we have already made, of the purpose for which it has been made, and with a firm determination on our part that in this great struggle we will do our duty, whatever it may be, to the very end.